

Please consider **OneFamily** as a **beneficiary** for your retirement account, DAF, or insurance policy. Together, we can accomplish anything!

# OneNation, OneFamily

**Dear Friends,**

As we approach the season of Passover, a time of reflection, remembrance, and renewal, *Am Israel* is fighting for its existence and the IDF is fighting to eradicate evil from the earth. In the face of adversity, OneFamily is helping victims of terror, injured and bereaved individuals; striving to address their unspeakable pain and trauma, and improve their lives. We act towards them as we would want to be treated, like **family**.

Over the years, we have learned that what these families need most to heal, after such horrific loss, is **connection** and **community**. They need a **caring network of people who can empathize with their experience**, find healing together, and find strength in one another.

Yet, as we prepare to observe Passover this year, our hearts are heavy with the realization that the need for our support has doubled, a grim consequence from the current wave of violence that has ravaged the land of Israel. The death and mayhem that occurred on October 7th, followed by months of terror, war, and hostage negotiations have left us reeling, but **more determined than ever to scale our vital work**.

**We are greatly humbled to be one of the recipients of the prestigious 2024 Genesis Prize.** This esteemed recognition underscores our dedication to providing

comprehensive care and assistance to terror victims, and we are deeply grateful for this acknowledgement of our efforts. May this acknowledgement serve to have the remaining hostages released immediately, so that there are none left in Gaza by the time this is read.

We appeal to you, our cherished supporters, to stand with us during this critical time. Your generous contributions will enable us to expand our efforts, providing essential assistance and solace to those in desperate need. Together, we can be a beacon of hope in the darkness, offering comfort and healing to those whose lives have been shattered by senseless hatred and violence.

**OneFamily will be making an uplifting three day/ two night Passover Seder Retreat in a hotel for newly widowed women and their children, for approximately 100 families, inviting those who are truly alone** first. An inspiring rabbi will lead the seders for 400 people, with psychologists and OneFamily professionals in attendance, to keep the families from crying over the empty seats at their table this year. There will be singing and dancing to distract these families from their overwhelming pain, and help them enjoy the holiday.

As we gather around the Passover table, let us remember the resilience of the human spirit and the power of unity. May this season of liberation inspire us to extend a helping hand to those who are suffering, reaffirming our commitment to *tikkun olam* - repairing the world, one victim at a time.

With heartfelt gratitude,



**Marc Belzberg**  
Chairman, OneFamily



## Supporting IDF Soldiers' Wives

In Modiin, amidst the chaos of Israeli life, a group of extraordinary women gathered, united by the shared burden of their new reality. OneFamily brought together the wives of severely wounded IDF soldiers. Doctors have been fighting for their lives and limbs for weeks, if not months. These heroes face a long road of recovery, with many uncertain if they will ever fully heal. And behind each of these brave soldiers is a loving wife, distraught with worry and pain over their husband's condition.

Our event began with pampering, offering these ladies a brief respite from their arduous daily lives of working, some are

raising babies on their own, and all caring for their wounded husbands in the hospital. OneFamily social workers picked up some of the women, and others babysat. All offered an open ear and warm hugs. We have learned that creating a caring community of peers is essential for healing trauma.

A transformative two-hour Psychodrama Workshop empowered the wives to delve into a profound introspection, gaining insights into their own identities, struggles, and those of others, amidst the backdrop of Am Israel's resilient fight for survival, a cause that has changed the course of their family's lives forever. Each woman was encouraged to express herself creatively and explore new perspectives.

## Adopt a Family A Heartfelt Call to Action

In the wake of unimaginable tragedy, stories of resilience and compassion emerge, serving as beacons of hope amidst the darkness. Such is the story of Michael Margolis from Palm Springs, whose recent journey to Israel led him to volunteer, and also Adopt a Family of victims through OneFamily. **"The whole trip was life changing, but [adopting a family] was on a different scale."**

OneFamily connected Michael with Abe\*, whose poignant narrative embodies the devastating aftermath of terror - a tale of loss, survival, and the enduring struggle to rebuild shattered lives. As Michael listened to Abe, and his neighbor Ruth\*, recount the harrowing events that tore their world apart on Oct. 7th, a deep connection was forged - a connection that transcended borders and united them in a bond of shared humanity.

For Abe, the day began at a small music festival with his brother, while his wife, Sara\*, and two young sons, Ben\* and Josh,\* slept peacefully as terror descended upon their kibbutz. Abe and Sara spoke on the phone one last time, and he reminded her to find the gun hidden in their home. Sara managed to kill one terrorist, but others raped her, murdered her and burned her body in front of two screaming children. Ben, who is 4 years old, was shot in the leg and the foot. After the terrorists left their house, Ruth, their neighbor, rescued the two boys and hid in a closet, only to be taken hostage by other terrorists and brought to Gaza. After carrying the boys into Gaza, Ruth and the boys were miraculously released, in order for the terrorists to make a propaganda video of majestically releasing hostages; so **Ruth ran back to Israel for a mile, carrying both boys** all the way. Upon their return to Israel, they hid for many hours until the IDF finally rescued them.

Doctors healed Ben's wounded leg, but the wound to his psyche after watching his mother's horrific murder, and enduring the terror of being held hostage, has yet to



The Margolis Family

be repaired. Abe is a wreck. His once-happy demeanor has been replaced by the post-trauma that defines his being after losing his wife and his home. His trauma is ever-present. His house was blown up by the terrorists, so he and his children escaped with only the clothes on their backs, his farm destroyed by heavy artillery and tanks. Ruth's house was also destroyed, and she too lost everything on October 7th.

Today, Abe, his boys, and Ruth navigate a path marred by grief and uncertainty, supported by the unwavering dedication of OneFamily. Their journey towards healing is a journey that Michael has chosen to walk alongside.

Through the "Adopt a Family" Program, donors have the opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of those affected by terror, forging connections that transcend borders and unite us in our shared humanity. For Michael, the decision to adopt Abe's family was a pledge of solidarity and commitment to stand with those whose lives have been forever altered by senseless violence. In the words of Michael himself, **"This trip has changed my life, and I haven't stopped thinking about Abe and Ruth. They are part of my family now, and I want them to know that."** Today, let us join Michael in extending our hands in friendship and solidarity- together, we can make a difference, one family at a time.

During heartfelt conversations, tears flowed freely as the wives shared their struggles- the sleepless nights, the overwhelming responsibilities, and the uncertainty of the future. In each other's stories, they found solace and strength- a true lifeline during their darkest moments.

At the conclusion of the therapy circle, each wife offered a word that encapsulated her journey- health, strength, joy, gratitude... These words were affirmations of resilience in the face of unimaginable challenges. As they left, hearts lighter and spirits lifted, they know that no matter what lies ahead, OneFamily will always be there for them.



## "The Secret Forest" in Cyprus A Therapeutic Retreat for Bereaved Parents

In the heart of Cyprus lies a sanctuary shrouded in the whispers of the wind and the secrets of the forest. Aptly named "The Secret Forest," this tranquil haven offers solace to those who have experienced unimaginable devastation following the loss of a child. Here, amidst the ancient trees and gentle rustle of leaves, bereaved parents find a refuge and a pathway toward healing, thanks to the compassionate efforts of OneFamily.

Newly bereaved parents, their hearts heavy with grief, arrive at The Secret Forest, unsure of what awaits them. Yet, alongside them are parents who have walked this painful path for years, offering a glimmer of hope, a testament to the resilience of the human spirit. Under the guidance of a compassionate psychologist, they embark on a journey of self-discovery, encouraged to reconnect with their inner selves, with nature, and with one another.



watch  
here



The retreat unfolds like a symphony of healing modalities. Yoga and meditation invite them to embrace stillness and find peace within. A sound bath washes over them, soothing their weary souls with its melodic vibrations. In group therapy sessions, they share their stories of their loss, their pain, and their memories, finding solace in the understanding gaze of fellow travelers on this journey of loss. Decadent group meals nourish the soul and bring some joviality.

Nature becomes their gentle companion, offering its own therapeutic effect. They wander through the property and the forest, feeling the earth beneath their feet and the sun filtering through the canopy above. Natural springs provide a source of renewal, washing away a small portion of their sorrow with each refreshing drop.

Evenings are marked by the warmth of community and the embrace of shared rituals. They gather to celebrate Shabbat, some finding comfort in the familiar cadence of prayers, and the glow of candlelight. A musical concert on Saturday night becomes a cathartic experience, as moving songs and touching lyrics speak to the depths of their grief, and the enduring power of love.

In a poignant ceremony, a Torah scroll is written in honor of those lost, a sacred tribute to lives cut short. Each parent selects a letter corresponding to their child's name to be written by the scribe.

Weekend after weekend, OneFamily continues to extend its hand of compassion to bereaved parents, bringing them to The Secret Forest to find solace and healing, and community. In this tranquil sanctuary, amidst the ancient trees and the whispers of nature, approximately 400 souls have found a glimmer of light in the darkness of loss, forging a path forward, one step at a time.



## Newly Orphaned

Deep in our hearts is a group we call "Sayeret," which means "Elite," and refers to a subsection within our Youth Department of children and young adults who have lost BOTH parents to terror. They have been meeting, healing, growing, and leaning on each other as "family" since they were 6, 8, 12, 15.... And they gather just as we all do at family times. Some orphans are now adults (over the age of 18; some have married and have children of their own) who haven't been able to bring their children to visit their grandparents... ever. And they never will. With support from OneFamily, the orphans who have grown up with us have blossomed into resilient adults, yet we stay with them, as family does, forever.

As pillars of hope, they extend their hands to new victims of terror, orphaned on Oct. 7th, regardless of age. These survivors reached out as

representatives of OneFamily, to let the new orphans know that there is actually a community of people who know what it's like. A "sayeret" can help them mourn and grieve, navigate their rights within the "system," give them strength, and just be there with them, whenever, wherever, offering comfort, understanding, and a path towards healing. Their journey from grief to giving embodies the power of resilience and transformative impact of our support over time.

Assaf was accompanied by his wife, Tena, and their baby son at the Sayeret event. Tena said: "Parents are 'home,' so we lost **two** homes [on Oct. 7th]: The one that is your house; and the one with the people that make you feel like you are where you belong. We lost both."

Sadly, dozens of children and young adults are suffering from the devastating loss of both parents. The new orphans from Oct. 7th have been invited to join



the Sayeret's events. Group gatherings give newcomers the much-needed opportunity to speak freely about their experiences and feelings. **The veteran orphans are likely the only ones in the world to fully understand the suffering and challenges of those who lost both parents on the first day of the war.** OneFamily was honored to bring them all together to facilitate their connection for comfort and healing.



watch here  
←



Send personalized cards for any occasion at [onefamilyfundus.org/cards](https://onefamilyfundus.org/cards)



## Bereaved Young Adults



In a heartfelt gathering organized by OneFamily, 50 bereaved young adults came together to share their journeys of loss and hope. With 60% newly navigating the depths of grief, and 40% carrying their sorrow from before Oct. 7th, the event served as a beacon of support and understanding. Through a therapeutic circle, participants

found solace in each other's stories, fostering connections that transcended sorrow. **The atmosphere was one of healing and camaraderie**, culminating in a session of wood carvings where emotions were chiseled into tangible expressions of resilience. **It was a testament to the power of community and shared experience, leaving attendees with renewed hope and strengthened bonds.**

*Grateful smiles adorn the face of a wounded IDF soldier as he receives much-needed body pillows from OFF, which will allow him to recuperate at home on his couch surrounded by the joyous laughter and playfulness of his children. Recuperation will take many months. We wish him and all of the other wounded soldiers a refuah sheleimah - a speedy recovery.*



Save the Date

**YOM HAZIKARON**

MAY 12, 2024 @ 7:30PM

LOCATION TBD

LIVE FEED ON:

ONEFAMILYTOGETHER

ONEFAMILY\_TOGETHER

מספחה אחת OneFamily  
מאגידת יחדיו נבנתה